

21.2.5(E)

The Duties and Privileges of the Children of God,

BRIEFLY CONSIDERED IN

AN ADDRESS

OF THE

Ministers and Messengers,

TO THE

SEVERAL BAPTIST CHURCHES,

OF THE

Suffolk and Norfolk Association,

HELD AT HORHAM,

May 23 and 24, 1809.

DRAWN UP

BY EDWARD MANSEY.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE ASSOCIATION.

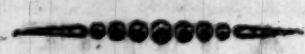
Spetch:

PRINTED BY A. DORRIS,

Bookseller, Binder, and Stationer, Bristol.

1809.

ADVERTISEMENT.



HAD the following letter been intended for the press, when first written, it would have appeared in a different form; but as it was read before the representatives of the several Churches, it was thought proper to print it in its original plan.

The writer has therefore to request the candid reader, and especially his Brethren in the Ministry, to excuse the inaccuracy of the arrangement, as it would have been too great a departure from the original, to have made such an alteration as would have been necessary to render it methodical.

It was on this account, as much as any, that the Author opposed its publication: notwithstanding, he firmly believes the contents are such as ought to be universally known, and the duties in particular, such as Gospel Ministers ought uniformly to enforce on the people of their charge; and such as the people of God ought constantly to practice.

Horham,
May 30, 1809.

}

E. M.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Ministers and Messengers of the several Baptised Churches met in Association at Horham, in the County of Suffolk, on the 23d and 24th Days of May, 1809, to the several Churches by them, then, and there represented, send Christian Salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,

WHETHER we address you as individuals, or unite our voices, talents, and attention, to serve you, we trust we have your prosperity and advantage at heart. For many years it has been an usual practice and custom to send you an annual letter, but we do not enter upon this service because it is customary, but with an earnest desire to promote your happiness, and to impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.

The subject we now submit to your consideration is of great importance, embracing a double question, which will not fail to unite doctrine and practice together. The question, brethren, which comes to you with our answer is: what are the *duties and privileges of the children of God*? In attending to this important subject, we beg leave to observe, that the persons whose duties and privileges we wish to describe, are those who are convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, and really brought to see the evil of it: who through divine grace have been effectually called to the knowledge and enjoyment of the truth, and to live by the faith of the son of God, who hath *loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood*: these people, however distinguished in the world, are the children of God. Now there are several important duties incumbent on them *as the children of God*, to which they are excited by the amazing love of our Lord Jesus Christ to them. 2 Cor. v, 14, 15. "For the love of Christ *constraineth us*, "because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and "that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto "themselves, *but unto him who died for them and rose again.*"

To expatiate upon every christian duty and privilege distinctly and particularly, would exceed the compass of a letter; we shall therefore only mention a few of the most important, which perhaps, will be found to include something of the whole.

First. Christian duty consists in a regular, constant, and diligent worship of the Almighty. God is the only object of religious adoration, as it is written: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou "serve." Matt. iv, 10. The christian ought to devote himself to the service

of God; and should consider it his meat and drink, to do the will of his Father who is in heaven. He should diligently attend to all the parts of divine worship, whether private or public.

Private worship consists in prayer to God, as the Father of all their mercies; and is both the duty and privilege of all his children: "What," says David, "shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Ps. cxvi, 12, 13. "When thou prayest," says our Lord Jesus Christ, "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" Matt. vi, 6.

Constancy in private devotion, lays the foundation for diligence in public; and it is to be feared, that where there is a neglect of public worship, there is little or no communion with God in the closet.

If ever it was necessary for the children of God to enter into their closets for prayer and supplication to their God, surely it is abundantly needful at this time. The judgments of God are abroad in the earth; and we know not how soon we may be called to witness similar troubles with those of our brethren in other countries: we ought to remember, that it is God who speaks to us, and says, "Come my people, enter into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Isaiah xxvi, 20.

Again Family worship, or the worship of God in the family, is a part of private devotion, and is not to be dispensed with on any account: the word of God is very awful to those who do not thus worship him. The Lord is invoked by the prophet to *pour out his fury upon the families* that call not on his name. Jer. x, 25. The dying advice of an eminent martyr to his wife was, *pray in thy family daily, that thy dwelling may be in the number of the families that do call upon God.* The children of God should constantly call their families together for prayer to God, at least once in every day; but oftener if possible. The language of David was; *evening, morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud:* and he (God) shall hear my voice. Ps. lv. 17. It is well known that Daniel made his petition *three times a day.*

The people of God should also read some part of the holy scriptures to their families in a regular manner, and nothing should prevent it. A great charge is laid upon the head of every family; which perhaps is not considered so much as it ought to be. How very striking is the language of God, by Moses, to the children of Israel, Deut. vi. 6, 7. "And the words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, *and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest in the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them on the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*" By this means, families are instructed in the precepts and blessings of the word of God; and in all probability, it was in this way that Timothy was instructed, who, *from a child knew the holy scriptures.*

Again. The children of God ought diligently to attend to all the duties of *public worship:* as on the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's supper, so upon the preaching of the gospel, and invocation of God in prayer. Christians, like *Zacharias and Elizabeth*, should walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

It is a painful reflection, that in almost all our churches, there is a manifest negligence in hearing the word of God, and attending the public

ordinances of divine worship. Among many professors of the gospel, it appears to be no crime to neglect the worship of God, in the morning of the Lord's-day! How that part of the day is spent by them, we pretend not to say; but one thing we may safely affirm, it is not spent as it ought to be. God says, Remember the sabbath day, *and keep it holy*. It is true, we are not under the law, but under grace; it is also true, that the sabbath, or day of rest, is transferred from the *seventh* to the *first day* of the week, because our Lord Jesus Christ rested from a greater work on that day, than the creation of the world was. But shall we for a moment suppose, that our obligation to keep the sabbath day has ceased on that account? by no means. *If the night* in which the children of Israel came out of Egypt, was a night *much to be observed by them*, as it certainly was (Exo. xii, 42), how much more must the day on which our Lord arose from the dead, triumphing over all his spiritual enemies, (by means of which we are delivered from worse than Egyptian bondage), *be a day to be remembered*, by all who believe in him for eternal life.

Many persons are not aware of the injury they do themselves, by wilfully neglecting the public worship of God, any part of the Lord's-day. Hear what God in his word says: "If ye walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary to you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." Lev. xxvi, 23, 24. But on the other hand, what exceeding great and precious promises are made to those who regard the Lord's-day. "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath of the Lord a delight; the holy of the Lord, honourable; not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" Isaiah lviii, 13, 14. To add no more, we apprehend, that by a diligent attendance on the worship of God on the Lord's-day, the christian glorifies God with his body and spirit, which are God's.

Secondly. It is the duty of the children of God, not to conform to this world. The world is an enemy to godliness, and a conformity to it is always attended with that which is hurtful to the peace and comfort of a real christian: hence the advice of the apostle in Romans xii, 2. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good acceptable, and perfect will of God." There is such a thing as conformity to the world, in pursuing the *riches, wealth, and carnal profits* of it.

How many times do the professing people of God by imitating the world, in seeking the riches of the world, plunge themselves into trouble and distress. Demas, having loved this present world, forsook the apostle Paul, though he was afterwards reclaimed, as appears from Phil. 24.

Hence the following emphatical language of the apostle: "They that will be rich" (i. e. that are determined on getting riches, let the consequence be what it may) "fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts *which drown men in destruction and perdition*. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after *righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness*." 1 Timothy vi, 9, 10.

Again. The christian ought not to conform to the pleasures of the world.

What has the man of God to do at *balls, plays, assemblies*, and other wicked places of gay amusements? Does he not know that these pleasures can only feed the lusts of the flesh, and nourish the *old man of sin*? "The end of all these things is death." Rom. vi, 24. With what propriety can he attend any religious exercise, when he has just returned from any of the above diabolical amusements? How can he at those times, unite in the worship of the holy God? and especially surround the holy table of the Lord Jesus! where he must profess to be dead to the world, and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness? The apostle might well propose the following very cutting interrogation: "What communion hath *light with darkness*? What concord hath *Christ with Belial*? Or what part hath he that believeth *with an infidel*? Wherefore come out from amongst them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord God Almighty." 2 Cor. vi, 14—18. Neither ought the children of God to conform to the vain customs, maxims, and fashions of the world. God himself has drawn a line of distinction, between one and the other; he calls one a *holy seed, a peculiar people*, &c. The other, he calls *the seed of the adulterer and the whore*, Isaiah liii, 3. *Serpents and a generation of vipers*. He says of his own, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. And after all this, and much more which might be mentioned, shall the christian attempt to bring about a coalition, as much as in him lies, by conforming to their abominations? God forbid!

We are not so foolish, however, to suppose that real religion lies in the colour or mode of apparel; still we imagine that *decency, gravity, and modesty* in cloathing, are of so much consequence, that where they are wanted, the word of God is not duly regarded. Has not the *holy spirit* thought proper to give directions in this, as well as in other things? He has:—Paul commands Titus to exhort young men to be sober-minded, and in all things to shew himself a pattern of good works. Peter, commands females to be in subjection to their own husbands.—"And not to adorn themselves with the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." The customs of the fashionable world, in many instances, are disgraceful even to human nature, fallen and corrupt as it is. We have witnessed in our assemblies, to speak in the most favourable terms, such indelicacy in apparel, as is more calculated to inflame the passions of corrupt nature, than to ornament, or otherwise benefit to body of the wearer. Is this to practice godliness? Can this be called following of Christ as *dear children*? O sin! thou infernal monster, how hast thou degraded mankind? O! let christians, the subjects of divine grace, the *children of God*, consider, they are not their own; but they are bought with a price, and should therefore glorify God with their body and spirit, which are his. 1 Cor. vi, 20.

Thirdly. The children of God should live in the practice of *christian benevolence*. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men especially to them who are of the household of faith. *To do good, and communicate, forget not*; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Christian benevolence consists in contributing to the necessities of poor believers, and in cultivating a familiar intercourse with them.

First. In contributing to the necessities of poor believers. Charge them, says the apostle, that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded.

That they be rich in good works, *ready to distribute*, willing to communicate, laying up in store a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. The duty of christian benevolence is so important, that without it a rich man cannot give evidence of his christianity. Whoso hath this world's goods, saith an inspired apostle, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? It cannot be said to dwell in him at all. To use the words of an eminent divine, since deceased: "The new testament, knows nothing of real christians, that are habitually of a selfish, envious, and contentious temper. Scarcely any character can be invented, the leading features in which are more heterogenous, discordant, and unsociable; than these of a *covetous, high-spirited, or spiteful true christian.*"

We highly commend those persons, who have introduced different methods of providing relief for the poor saints; such as charitable funds, *alms-houses, asylums for the needy*, &c. yet we have observed, that there are those who are fond of seeing their names amongst a list of subscribers to a public charity; who nevertheless, are doing good *only to be seen of men*; and it is to be feared, are men of no christian benevolence at all. Our Lord says, when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left-hand know what thy right-hand doeth. Real godliness requires very close attention, and diligent application. Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless, and widows in their afflictions, as well as to keep himself unspotted from the world.

We apprehend there is a great trust reposed in the rich professor of christianity: he must not think that his *gold and silver* is in such sense his own, that he may lay it up to *rust and canker* or employ it in *monopoly and increase*, while the poor are frowned on, and driven from his door! no brethren: we are to charge the rich, to be rich in good works; that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, &c. Hear what God says in Deut. xv, 7—11. "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates, thou shalt not harden thy heart nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother. Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest him: because for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee saying, thou shalt *open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy land.*" Neither ought the rich christian to think he has discharged all the duties of his station, in giving to those objects, who in times of distress, may have *applied to him for assistance*; for

Secondly. Christian benevolence consists in cultivating a friendly intercourse with poor believers; and even in seeking out proper objects upon whom to bestow acts of kindness. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. James i, 27. The poor, says our Lord Jesus Christ, ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good; but me ye have not always. Intimating, that though he should be taken from them, yet he would leave such behind him as should need assistance; and that whatever we may do for them, he would take as done for himself. So at the great day of judgment, he will say to them on his right-hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me

"in : naked, and ye clothed me : *I was sick. and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*" He will also add ; "*In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" But where that is not done to his poor brethren, it is not done to him ; (ver. 45) and to them who have not done it, he will say, *go ye cursed !* A covetous christian is a being the scriptures know nothing of. Covetous men there may be, but the word of God says they are abhorred of the Lord. Ps. x, 3. God says, the poor shall never cease out of the land ; nor may the rich cease relieving them. There are many persons professing christianity, who are rich in this world, so much elated with their riches, that they seldom are found associating with the poor of God's children ; and in many instances they are unknown to them, consequently neglected, and their houses unfrequented by them. But are the *rich, wealthy, and the great*, UNKNOWN, NEGLECTED, and their HOUSES UNFREQUENTED ? Very rarely. The language of a very eminent divine of the 16th century, is very applicable to many of our modern professors of the gospel : he says, " Those of high degree are usually encompassed with so many circumstances of distance, that they know not how to break through them, unto that familiarity of love that ought to be among believers. But—we all serve the same common Lord and master ; who when he was rich, for our sake's became poor ; and if we, for his sake, lay not aside the consideration of all our riches, with that distance of mind from the poorest saints, we do not act agreeable to the character of his disciples. I speak not now of laying out men's wealth for the use of the poor ; but of lowliness of mind, in condescending to a brotherly communion, in love with the poorest of them. Let, therefore, the greatest know, that there is no duty of spiritual love unbecomes them : and if their state and condition keep them from communion of love which is required of all believers, it is their snare and temptation. If they converse not with the lowest of them, as they have occasion ; if they visit them not when it is requisite ; if they bear them not on their hearts and minds, as their especial church relation requires, they sin against the law of this holy love."

To cultivate a friendly and familiar intercourse with the poor and afflicted of God's children, is a duty peculiarly binding on those who are rich : and it is hardly possible for a rich christian in the discharge of it, not to profit thereby. While he converses with the poor, he becomes acquainted with all their troubles ; many of which arise out of their peculiar circumstances in providence : and is it possible for him to become acquainted therewith, without admiring the divine goodness for blessing him with abundance ? we believe it is not. And can he thus become acquainted with the *troubles, wants, and necessities* of poor believers, without sympathising with them and communicating somewhat to their assistance ? he cannot. Were it otherwise, might we not reasonably ask with the apostle, how dwelleth the love of God in that man ? Brethren, let us not love in word only, *but in deed, and in truth.*

The late venerable Abraham Booth, speaking of rich professors of the gospel, observed : " Are they a little exalted by *wealth, station, or affluence*, above the common level ? In expectation of being received with politeness, and entertained with elegance, they frequently visit where plenty resides, and prosperity smiles. Or if affliction obtain their notice, it is that of their acquaintance in respectable situations ; for the *omniscient* seldom beholds them carrying relief to the poor ; or labouring to administer consolation in a GARRET. For visits of this kind they have no time :

“that is, they have no inclination; and a thousand excuses are formed to keep conscience easy, in the neglect of so manifest a duty.—While, however, the oracle of heaven declares, that pure religion, and unde- filed before God and the Father, consists in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, it is hard to conceive how such an important duty can be so much neglected by professors of the gospel, and their consciences be quiet, if not *asleep or dead*.” Neither does the duty of christian benevolence stop here; for it obliges the rich to *provide for, receive, and entertain* the poor at their *own houses and tables*. This is a part of christianity seldom practiced as it ought to be: for as Dr. Owen observes, “Most men in their feasting and entertainments walk in direct contempt of the rules our Saviour gives in that case, and yet approve themselves therein.”

Our Saviour’s rule on the subject is as follows: “When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsman, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee: But when thou makest a feast, call the *poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind*; for they cannot recompence thee; for thou shalt be recompenced at the resurrection of the dead.”

The above mentioned Divine says: “The tables of wealthy professors are frequently furnished with a plenty of delicate and costly food, for the entertainment of those who can make a return in kind: but how seldom do they make a feast to the poor? How few are disposed to imitate Sir Matthew Hale? of whom, his biographer says: as he never went to public feasts, so he gave no entertainments, *but to the poor*.”

It is not, however, to be understood in the above text, that our Lord absolutely prohibits a christian from entertaining his friends and relations, or even his rich neighbours; but neither one, nor the other, ought to be provided for to the utter exclusion of the poor. Paul, speaking in commendation of Onesiphorus, says: “*He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain*: but when he was at Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.”

This duty of benevolence is of such importance in religion, that even a public fast is not acceptable to God without it. “Is not this the fast, says God, that I have chosen?—*Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out, to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him*: and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh. Isaiah lviii, 7. Much more might be said on this subject, but we hasten to speak something of the *privileges of God’s children*.”

The scriptures of truth assure us, that they are blessed with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus: therefore,

First. They are the *objects of the love of God*. His love was fixed on them in his *dear Son*, in whom he viewed them with complacency and delight from all eternity: and he still continues thus to view them in him; declaring the *greatness, freeness, and riches of his love* to them. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. The love of God to his own, as it had no beginning, so it has no end. Thus it is said of our Lord Jesus Christ: “*Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end*.” Not only to the end of his own life, nor barely to the end of their’s; *but to the end of the world, and for ever*. John xiii, 1. The word which is here translated, *unto the end*; in Luke xviii, 5, is rendered *continual*.

Secondly. *They are the objects of his choice.*—They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they might be holy, and without blame before him in love. Ephes. i, 3—5. Not chosen merely to office, as were the *prophets, priests, and kings*, under the Old Testament; and the *apostles and ministers* of the gospel, under the New: nor were they chosen as a *nation*, as the people of the Jews were; but they were chosen personally, as *God's jewels, his treasure, and everlasting portion*.—They are chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.—Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 2 Thes. ii, 13. 1 Peter i, 2.

Thirdly. *They are the adopted sons of God.*—They are his children.

In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there shall it be said unto them, ye are the *sons of the living God*. I will be a *Father unto you*, and ye shall be my *sons and daughters*, saith the Lord Almighty. Hosea i, 10. 1 Cor. vi, 18.

The adoption of God's elect was an immanent act of the divine will, which was in God from all eternity; hence, they were not only predestinated to the adoption of children (Ephes. i, 5.), to the blessing itself, to be openly and actually enjoyed in time; but this blessing was provided and bestowed in the *everlasting covenant of grace*. Because ye are *sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, *Abba, Father*. To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the Sons of God: that is, *the right, dignity, or privilege of sonship*. Galatians iv, 6. John i, 12.

Fourthly. They are blessed with the *pardon of sins*: of all sins, *past, present, and to come*. A privilege this, not easily estimated. The forgiveness of sins, is only through our Lord Jesus Christ; and is in consequence of his having made atonement for them by his own blood: for as it is in him we have redemption through his blood, so also, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Ephes. i, 7.

Sin lies upon the sinner, and lays him under obligation to punishment, unless taken off: but the sins of God's elect are taken off them and laid upon Christ. Blessed, says David, is he whose transgression is forgiven, **OR LIFTED UP**. The sins of God's elect are *covered*: hence it is said, thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast *covered all their sins*. Psalm lxxxv, 2. The sins of God's elect are said *to be blotted out*; (that is, out of the sight of God), so that he does not view them with the eye of his justice; hence, he says: *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins*. Isaiah xxii, 44. There is also a non-imputation of sins, as David says:—blessed is the man, to whom *the Lord imputeth not iniquity*.

Fifthly. They have the privilege of a *justifying righteousness*; for where there is non-imputation of sins, there must be an imputation of righteousness. Blessed is the man, *to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works*, is the language of the scripture. It is the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is imputed to his people for justification: and as he and they are *one* in the eye of the law, they are *complete in him*, and will be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. By him, all that believe, are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Acts xiii, 39.

Sixthly. *They are redeemed by our Lord Jesus Christ. From sin;*

from the *curse of the law*; from *death and the grave*; and they are redeemed unto God by *his blood*, and are made kings and priests unto God and his Father, and shall reign with him for ever and ever. We do not mean that by the death of Christ, they are merely put into a state of salvation; but that he hath given himself *for them*, that is, FOR THEIR PERSONS; to *redeem them*, THEIR PERSONS, from all iniquity. He hath laid down his life for THE SHEEP, he hath PURCHASED THEM with his own blood; he hath redeemed them *from the earth from amongst men*. Titus ii, 14. John x, 15. Acts xx, 28. Rev. v, 9, xiv, 4. Christ redeemed the persons of his elect, by paying the price of their redemption into the hands of divine Justice; suffering an adequate punishment for THEIR sins, *and no more*: his sufferings being not designed for mankind indiscriminately, were not effectual to remove their sins, and deliver their persons.

Lastly. They are blessed with the *holy spirit of God*, for several important purposes.—

First, To convince them of sin, shew the evil of it, and humble the soul under a sense of it.

Secondly, To regenerate the soul, and form the image of Christ there.

Thirdly, To sanctify the soul, and make it meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Fourthly, To reveal the Saviour, and work a principle of faith in the soul; to realize all blessings of divine grace, bring them home to, and establish the children of God in them.

Lastly, To lead the soul into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—Not a liberty to sin, but a liberty in holiness; and a glorious liberty with their covenant God and Father in Christ. If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John viii, 36.

It is a liberty from the galling yoke of the law of Moses: so that they serve God in newness of Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter. They have the Spirit of God, whereby they cry, Abba, Father; the Spirit itself bearing witness with their Spirit, that they are the children of God. This glorious liberty comes to the soul neither by *walking* nor *working*, but by believing: hence it is said in Heb. iv, 3. we which *have believed*, do enter into rest. Now each of these privileges and duties, with many more, which might have been mentioned, are all provided in the *covenant of grace*, which is ordered in all things and sure which is all our salvation and all our desire. Much more might be said, but we would not protract our letter, which perhaps is already too long; we therefore conclude our remarks in the language of an inspired Apostle; Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are *honest*, whatsoever things are *just*, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, whatsoever things are of *good report*, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things*. Phil. iv, 8.

Signed on behalf, and with the approbation of the Association,

EDWARD MANSER, Moderator.

There were but nine Churches in this Association last year, namely, Ipswich, Diss, Grundisburgh, Bury, Otley, Claxton, Watisham, Horham, and Stoke-ash. It appeared from their letters, that in the course of the last year, there had been

Baptized.....	42	Dismissed.....	127*
Received	22	Separated.....	29
Restored.....	8	Dead	22

Total number of Members 1,514.

* Ninety-six of this number were dismissed to form three New Churches, viz 18 from the Church at Horham, to form the Church at Laxfield; 38 from the Church at Ipswich, to form the Church at Walton; and 40 from the Church at Grundisburgh, to form the Church at Charsfield. The Church at Beccles also was formed this year, a branch of the Church at Claxton.

Four Churches were united with the Association this year: viz. Charsfield, Walton, Tunstall, and Beccles. The next Association is to be at Diss, on the first Tuesday and Wednesday in June, 1809. Put up at the King's-Head, precisely at 12 o'clock. Brothers Thompson and Hupton to preach, in case of failure, the Minister from Beccles.

FINIS.